



U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Kansas

## NEWS RELEASE

Eric Melgren, U.S. Attorney

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**Contact: Kena Rice**

(316) 269-6481

**Headquarters**  
1200 Epic Center  
301 N. Main  
Wichita, Kansas 67202  
(316)269-6481  
FAX (316)269-6484

**Topeka Office**  
444 Quincy  
Topeka, Kansas 66683

**Kansas City Office**  
500 State Avenue  
Suite 360  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### TOPEKA WEED AND SEED - PROJECT RECEIVES \$175,000 FOR CHESNEY PARK/CENTRAL AREA

TOPEKA, Kan. – U.S. Attorney Eric Melgren, Mayor James McClinton, and Police Chief Ed Klumpp announced today that the Department of Justice, Office of Weed and Seed, has awarded the Chesney Park/Central Weed and Seed Project \$175,000 in first year funding. The project is also eligible for continued funding for the next four years from the Department of Justice.

The Chesney Park/Central Weed and Seed Project is a new Weed and Seed designated site that encompasses the area bounded on the west by Washburn Avenue, to the east by Western Avenue, to the north by 21<sup>st</sup> Street, and to the south by 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

Weed and Seed is a Department of Justice two prong program where law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in “weeding out” crime and human services are “seeded” into the community. These seeded services focus on prevention, intervention and treatment, and neighborhood revitalization.

Topeka has received Weed and Seed grant funding from the Department of Justice for the past five years . Previously, Topeka had four designated Weed and Seed areas - **Central Weed and Seed** extending from Washburn on the west to Topeka Blvd. on the east and from 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the south to 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the north; **Eastern Weed and Seed** extending from BNSF Railroad tracks on the west to Deer Creek Parkway on the east and from I-70 on the south to the BNSF railroad tracks on the north; **Hi-Crest Weed and Seed** extending from Kansas Avenue on the west to California Avenue on the east and from 37<sup>th</sup> Street on the south to 29<sup>th</sup> Street on the north; and **North Weed and Seed** extending from Topeka Avenue on the west to the Kansas River on the east and south and the old Soldier Creek channel behind Garfield Park on the north. The Eastern, Hi-Crest and North Weed and Seed areas are now considered graduate sites by the Department of Justice after successfully participating in the Weed and Seed Project. These neighborhoods have experienced as much as a 31% decrease in serious crime during the past five years.

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The Topeka Police Department provides the “Weed” prong of the Weed and Seed program. The Topeka Police Department has a Community Policing Officer assigned to the Weed and Seed area and will focus on decreasing street-level drug sales, decreasing the number of crack houses, and reducing youth gang activity.

The “Seed” prong of the program supports educational and social services programs for both children and adults. Central Park Community Center is a safe haven, available to youth and adults, providing educational opportunities, recreation programs and social services. A great example of those who benefit from the Weed and Seed program are the children who participate in activities at Central Park Community Center. The Center receives Weed and Seed funding to help support their after-school program.

During the next five years, the Chesney Park/Central Weed and Seed Project will work through the Topeka Police Department and community organizations to increase community policing; build closer relationships between the community and law enforcement; implement a Neighborhood Watch Program; regularly schedule neighborhood cleanups; improve lighting in the area to reduce crime; and organize community pride and social events including carnivals, fairs, sporting events, and dances.

“We have seen the success of this program in the graduate Weed and Seed sites here in Topeka,” said U.S. Attorney Melgren. “This program weeds out crime and seeds in neighborhood revitalization. We look forward to seeing the same kind of success in the Chesney Park/Central Weed and Seed site.”

“Weed and Seed has proven to be an absolute success story in helping improve Topeka’s at-risk neighborhoods. That’s why we’re delighted to continue a good thing in the Chesney Park/Central Topeka area. Thank you, U.S. Department of Justice, for your assistance in making this happen.” said Mayor James McClinton.

“Our Department will continue to focus on assisting neighborhoods in the reduction of crime. Weed and Seed support is key to improving the quality of life in our community.” Chief Ed Klumpp said.